

considerable rapidity. I also saw in the same communication that the Department of Agriculture had abandoned the idea of eradicating the scale from the country.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. You have reference to the Department of Agriculture for Ontario, not to this department.

Mr. SPROULE. I understood it applied both to the Department of Agriculture of Ontario and the department here as well.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. No.

Mr. SPROULE. The first proposal was, of course, to destroy the trees on which the scale was found and to fumigate the stock. I understood that that first plan was abandoned.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. All the work the hon. gentleman is discussing was the work of the department at Toronto, not of this department at all.

Mr. SPROULE. This department outlined the methods by which it was thought it could be eradicated, and it was proposed to take up the work jointly with the Department of Agriculture for Ontario.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. No.

Mr. SPROULE. The hon. gentleman says no, but I remember the discussion distinctly. The question was asked, why keep it out if there is no effort to stop it in the country, and the answer was that the Department of Agriculture for Ontario would endeavour to destroy it in the country, and the effort of this department would be directed to prevent its importation, and by these joint means we would hope to get rid of it. It is quite clear that one or both were out in their judgment, and that the means adopted were not as effectual as it was thought at that time they would be. It may be that we are preventing the importation of it, and yet it may be found after a while that we are not.

Tracadie Lazaretto, \$5,500.

Hon. Mr. PRIOR. Last year, the hon. minister will remember, I brought up the case of the Chinese lepers in British Columbia. I pointed out to him how manifestly unfair it was that the government had not taken charge of those lepers. At the present time and for many years past the cities of Victoria and Vancouver have had to pay for the maintenance of those lepers. Large sums of money are collected every year from the Chinese who land in British Columbia, as head tax—over \$200,000, the larger proportion of which goes into the Dominion treasury. I am well aware what the minister said last year with regard to the lepers in New Brunswick—that the Dominion government were obliged to take

Mr. SPROULE.

care of them, because they had agreed to do so when New Brunswick entered confederation. But it was also proved at that time by documents which I read from, that the Dominion government had taken charge of lepers from Nova Scotia and Manitoba; and my contention, and that of all British Columbians, is that if the Dominion government do that, they ought also to take charge of those poor wretches in British Columbia. It is costing \$1,000 or \$1,100 a year to maintain those men on D'Arcy Island, and the former government used to allow \$1,000 a year for this purpose; but since the present government came into power—

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. That is not an accurate statement of fact.

Hon. Mr. PRIOR. Well, they have not paid anything for the last two or three years. I would not say that they did not pay the first year or the second year; but they certainly stopped it; and they have not paid a cent for the last two or three years for the maintenance of those lepers. It seems outrageous that the government should treat British Columbia in that manner. What is the reason British Columbia cannot expect the same treatment from the government as Nova Scotia and Manitoba? There is not a man in British Columbia but thinks the same as I do with regard to that matter—that it is unfair to make flesh of one and fish of another. I cannot understand it unless it is because Victoria has always sent Conservatives here to represent it. I would like to ask the hon. gentleman on what ground he has refused persistently to maintain these lepers in British Columbia?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. I stated a few moments ago that the hon. gentleman's statement was not accurate. I understood him to lead the House to believe that the Conservative government had paid \$1,000 a year for several years.

Hon. Mr. PRIOR. So they did.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. The hon. gentleman is incorrect. They paid it one year. They did not pay it the year before I came into office, and it has not been paid since.

Hon. Mr. PRIOR. They paid it more than one year.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. The hon. gentleman says so; I say they did not. It was open for discussion at the time, and I looked into the matter and decided it was not necessary or proper that the department should pay, and I declined to pay it.

Hon. Mr. PRIOR. For what reason?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. Because it was a matter affecting the public